

The United Nations General Assembly: Prejudice without Pride

The UN General Assembly has the tiresome habit of almost always being wrong. No one expected the 193-member international organization to be the pinnacle of political wisdom, but few had thought it would become base clay.

It showed its habitual lack of balance and its persistent prejudice once again on November 19, 2015 when it passed six Resolutions on the Middle East, none of which addressed the real outstanding problems, Islamist terrorism, the continuing advance of ISIS, or the ongoing slaughter in the civil war in Syria.

It was left to the Russian delegate, Vladimir K. Safronkov, who spoke of the chaos in the Middle East, of ISIS and the terrorist group al-Nusra fighting for territory and expanding their terrorist activities.

Instead, there were the customary repetitive resolutions with only one objective, criticism or condemnation of Israel. Rather than forwarding the prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinians, the resolutions make it virtually impossible because of the one sided hostility against Israel.

A few of the six can be considered. One resolution on Jerusalem was passed by a vote of 153 to 7 with 8 abstentions. It declared that any actions by Israel to impose its jurisdiction on Jerusalem were illegal, and called on Israel to stop all such measures.

It implicitly accepted the Palestinian falsehood, its Narrative of Victimhood, by indirectly indicting Israel and calling for respect for the historic status quo at Jerusalem's

Holy Places, especially the Haram al-Shariff or Temple Mount, as if Israel was harming it.. The UNGA forgot it was the Palestinians who were using the Mosque as the center for aggressive action. The UN also said nothing about the Palestinian absurd assertion that the Western Wall was part of the al-Aqsa Mosque, thereby denying the link of the Jewish people with its holy sites.

The most dishonorable resolution was A/70/L.17 on the Golan Heights. The resolution, which was adopted by a vote of 105 to 6 with 56 abstentions, repeated the UN Security Resolution 497 of December 17, 1981 that the Israeli decision of December 14, 1981 to impose its law, jurisdiction, and administration, on the "occupied Syrian Golan Heights" was null and void. It demanded that Israel withdraw from that territory to the line of June 4, 1967.

What is remarkable in all this was the claim by the Syrian representative, Bashar Ja'afari, who spoke twice on the issue, that his country had an inalienable right to recover its territory that had been annexed by Israel by force. The resolution reaffirmed the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, but limited its application to one country.

The Syrian regime led by Bashar al-Assad regime today controls only about a third of the area of Syria. In the context of a civil war in his country between rival forces with which Israel has nothing to do, Ja'afari declared that the Syrian people were determined to regain their land, not from ISIS, Iran, or Hizb'allah, but from Israel, which currently subjected them to oppression, racial discrimination, and arbitrary detention.

Let's spend a few moments on the truth rarely recognized by the automatic anti-Israeli majority in the UNGA. One might ignore the fatuous remarks of the Cuban representative that the Israeli representative was not familiar with what was

going on her own country of Israel. Though there seems to be no relationship with that impertinent remark, the Cuban explained that was why Cuba would continue to defend the cause of the Palestinian people.

In the 1960s, Syria, ruled by the Ba'ath party, had been attacking northern Israeli communities from positions in the Golan Heights and used the area to stage incursions into Israel territory. In 1964 Syria attempted to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River.

After false information given to Egypt and Syria by the Soviet Union on May 13, 1967 that Israeli troops were massing on the Syria border, a Syrian-Egyptian mutual defense pact was signed, and Syria moved 40,000 troops to its border. On June 5, 1967 Syrian jets and also artillery attacked Israel northern communities, thus provoking the war. The next day Syrian forces attacked a number of Israeli areas but they were beaten back. Syria declared it was not bound by any cease-fire. An Israeli counterattack drove Syrians from the Golan Heights as the Six Day War ended.

Immediately after the war, Israel declared that the areas it had captured, the Golan Heights, Gaza, the West Bank, and Sinai, would be returned in exchange for Arab recognition of the right of Israel to exist and for guarantees against future attacks.

Another resolution, A/70/L.11, passed by a vote of 99 to 8 with 59 abstentions, was to continue to "provide resources," to fund the UN Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights. Few outsiders remember that this Division, in fact a lobby for Palestinians, was created on December 2, 1977 to "create an informed public opinion around the world in support of the achievements of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people." It prepares studies, issues publications, and promotes maximum publicity for them. The U.S. funds a good part of this expense.

Around the same time, in 1977, the UN created the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Ironically this Day is usually celebrated on November 29, a date to mark the anniversary of UN General Assembly Resolution 181 (II) of November 29, 1947 passed by a vote of 33 to 13 with 10 abstentions. In the topsy-turvy UN world, what is forgotten is the content and the consequence of the resolution. It called for the creation of two states, an independent Arab state, a Jewish state, and a special status for Jerusalem. The resolution was accepted by the Jewish Agency, which then acted to establish the State of Israel, but it was rejected by all Arab authorities. The opportunity to create a Palestinian state was lost.

The conclusion can only be that these UN resolutions are a stumbling block in the way of achieving a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East. Anyone genuinely interested in the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians should call for the cessation of these resolutions that inflame hostility towards Israel and prevent the resumption of peace talks.

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